CONSTITUTION

OF THE

GRAND COMMANDERY

OF

Knights Templars and the Appendant Orders

OF

MASSACHUSETTS AND RHODE ISLAND,

AS AMENDED

OCTOBER 30, 1878.

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ARTICLE I.—GRAND COMMANDERY.

STYLE AND TITLE.

SECTION 1.—The style and title of this body is "The Grand Commandery of Knights Templars and the Appendant Orders of Massachusetts and Rhode Island."

JURISDICTION.

SEC. 2.—Its jurisdiction extends over the territorial limits of Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

POWERS.

SEC. 3.—In it alone is vested the right and duty, which it cannot delegate, to superintend and govern all Commanderies of Knights Templars and the Appendant Orders within this jurisdiction.

It has exclusive power to grant Dispensations and Warrants for forming and opening commanderies of the above Orders, within this jurisdiction, and to extend or revoke the same.

It enacts statutes and issues edicts, and amends and repeals the same.

It censures, suspends, and erases counsels and commanderies, and holds any of their members amenable for any violation or neglect of its statutes and edicts, and has supreme authority, throughout this jurisdiction, in all matters pertaining to Templar Masonry, subject only to the ancient landmarks of the Order, and the Grand Encampment of the United States.

MEMBERS.

SEC. 4.—It shall consist of a Grand Commander, Deputy Grand Commander, Grand Generalissimo, Grand Captain-General, Grand Prelate, Grand Senior Warden, Grand Junior Warden, Grand Treasurer, Grand Recorder, Grand Standard-Bearer, Grand Sword-Bearer, Grand Warder, Grand Captain of the Guards, — *ex-officiis*; of all Past Grand Commanders and Grand Masters, Past Deputy Grand Commanders and Deputy Grand Masters, Past Grand Generalissimos, and Past Grand Captains-General of this body, so long as they remain members of commanderies under this jurisdiction; of the Commanders, Generalissimos, and Captains-General, for the time being, of all subordinate commanderies under this jurisdiction; and of all Past Commanders of such subordinates, so long as they are members of commanderies under this jurisdiction, each of whom shall be entitled, when present, to one vote and no more, except as proxy.

A permanent member has but one vote in his own right as such, and but two in any case.

ATTENDANCE AND PROXIES.

SEC. 5.—Each of the officers named in the preceding section, save and except Past Commanders, being unable to attend the conclaves in person, shall have the power to appoint a proxy, who shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges of his constituent, except that of taking his rank in Grand Commandery.

Such proxy must, at the time of his service, be a member of *the same subordinate commandery as his principal*, and a templar of not less than three years' standing, and must present a properly authenticated certificate of his appointment.

The R. E. Grand Commander, immediately after his installation, shall appoint a committee of three members as a standing Committee on Credentials, for the year ensuing, whose duty it shall be to ascertain and report to the commandery as early as may be at every conclave, who are entitled to seats therein; also a committee of three members, who shall be styled a Committee on Printing, whose duty it shall be to supervise the printing of the proceedings, and shall have authority to decide what shall be printed therein, and the Grand Recorder shall act under the advice and direction of said committee in all matters of printing; also a committee of three members to be styled a Committee on By-Laws, who shall take into consideration and report upon all By-Laws of subordinate bodies which may be referred to them by the Grand Commandery or Grand Commander.

OFFICERS, ELECTION, AND TITLES.

SEC. 6.—The first nine officers shall be chosen by written ballot; the others, together with a Grand Sentinel, by appointment of the Grand Commander.—

No knight is eligible to any office in this Grand Commandery, unless he be a member of some subordinate commandery, and a templar of not less than three years' standing. and shall have previously attained the rank of Past Commander

The officers thus chosen shall serve until their successors have been duly elected and installed. The title of the Grand Commander is "RIGHT EMINENT;" that of Deputy Grand Commander, "VERY EMINENT;" of the other Grand Officers, "EMINENT."

CONCLAVES.

SEC. 7.—This Grand Commandery shall hold a regular conclave in October and May of each year, at such time and place as the presiding officer shall appoint, — in October, for the election of officers and the transaction of the annual business; and in May, for the exemplification of the work and ritual, the transaction of such special business as shall be presented and the consideration of such matters as pertain to the general good of the order.

Special conclaves may be held at the pleasure of the presiding officer; but no business shall be transacted at a special conclave, save that which was specified in the original notice.

PREROGATIVES AND DUTIES OF OFFICERS.

SEC. 8.—The Grand Commander shall have a watchful supervision over all the subordinate commanderies, and see that all the constitutional enactments, rules and edicts, of the Grand Encampment of the United States, and of this Grand Commandery, are duly and promptly obeyed.

The Grand Commander and Deputy Grand Commander, at their pleasure, visit and preside in any subordinate commandery, and give such instruction and direction in

the work and ritual as the good of the order may require, always conforming to the ancient landmarks and this Grand Constitution. The Deputy Grand Commander, in the event of the death, removal or physical incompetency of his superior, shall act as the Grand Commander.

It is the duty of the Grand Commander, in person or by one of his council, to visit and examine every subordinate commandery under Dispensation once in three months, and every chartered commandery annually, and cause a report of the same to be made at the annual conclave of this Grand Commandery: *provided, however,* that when in the judgment of the Grand Commander the interest of the institution will be promoted thereby, he may designate one of the Grand Lecturers to make such visit and report to him.

It is the duty of the Grand Treasurer to report to the Grand Commander or presiding officer, whenever and as often as there shall be a surplus of one hundred dollars in the treasury, not subject to any appropriation already made; and to invest the same by and with the advice of the first two officers.

It is the duty of the Grand Recorder, annually to communicate to the Grand Recorders of all State Grand Commanderies, and to the Grand Recorder of the Grand Encampment of the United States of America, a list of all the Grand Officers of the Grand Commandery, and all such other matters as the Right Eminent Grand Commander shall deem to be for the general good of the Order, or useful for their information.

The other duties of the above officers, and the duties of the other officers are such as are traditionally appropriate to their offices, and such as may be required of them by this Grand Commandery and the Grand Commander.

NEW COMMANDERIES.

SEC. 9.—Dispensations for forming and opening new commanderies, upon the petition of not less than nine Knight Templars residing within the jurisdiction, may be issued by the Grand Commander during the recess of the Grand Commandery only. Dispensations so issued to be of force only until the next stated conclave of this body, unless continued by vote thereof; *provided, however*, that no dispensation shall be issued without the consent of the commandery nearest to the place where the new one is to be located; and, if in that town or city there is more than one, the consent of all shall be obtained.

Charters shall be granted by vote of the Grand Commandery alone, and at a stated conclave.

A Commandery formed within this jurisdiction, without a dispensation or charter, as above provided, shall be deemed illegal; and all communication between Commanderies under this jurisdiction, and the members of such illegal ones, is hereby strictly forbidden.

FEES FOR DISPENSATIONS AND CHARTERS.

SEC. 10.—The fees for a Dispensation are forty dollars to the Grand Commandery, and three dollars to the Grand Recorder; and, for a Charter, sixty dollars to the Grand Commandery, and seven dollars to the Grand Recorder; and, for a charter without a previous Dispensation, one hundred dollars to the Grand Commandery, and ten dollars to the Grand Recorder. In no case shall a dispensation or Charter be issued, until the required fees shall have been paid to the Grand Treasurer.

GRAND FUND.

Stricken out of Sub-stitute adopted Oct 31. 1879

SEC. 11.—~~One-tenth~~ of the unincumbered funds of this body, at its ~~Annual~~ Conclave in October, 1859, and one-

The invested funds of this Grand Com.ᵈ, heretofore established by the provisions of the Constitution, & now held in accordance with said provisions shall constitute the Grand Fund.

The income of said Grand Fund may be expended for charitable or other purposes as may be determined by the Grand Commandery. All unexpended income of this fund & all donations to the same shall be annually added to the principal.

A Board, to be styled 'The Trustees of the Grand Fund of the Grand Commandery R.T. of Mass & R.I.' shall be constituted in manner following, viz:- The R.E. Grand Commander & the E. Grand Treasurer, shall be, ex officiis, members of said Board, & there shall be elected at the regular Conclave in Oct. 1879 three members of the Gd. Com.ᵈ, to serve, one for one year, one for two years & one for three years, as members of said Board, who during their term of service thereon, shall hold no other office in this Gd. Body. And thereafter there shall be annually elected one such member of said Board for the term of three years. Any vacancy occurring in the Board shall be filled for the remainder of the term by the Grand Com.ᵈ, by election at any regular or special conclave.

It shall be the duty of the Board to hold in trust, for the benefit of the Gd. C.ᵈ the property belonging to the said Gd. Fund, and to attend to the care & safe & profitable investment thereof. They shall make a detailed report, in writing, of the condition of the said Gd. Fund at each annual Conclave. A failure to make such report, unless excused by the Gd. C.ᵈ, shall render the members of said Board ineligible to election to any office in the Gd. C.ᵈ the following year. The Treasurer of the Trustees shall give bonds with sureties to the satisfaction of the Board for the faithful discharge of the duties of his office.—

tenth of its present and future income, shall be set apart, and shall form a "Grand Fund;" the interest only of which shall be expended, for charitable and other purposes, at the discretion of this Grand Body; *provided, however*, that no portion of the interest shall be expended for any purpose whatever, until the principal shall amount to five thousand dollars. The unexpended income of the fund, and all donations to the same, shall be annually added to the principal. Until this fund shall amount to five thousand dollars, it shall not be in knightly faith to diminish the rate of increase as provided above.

The Grand Commander, Grand Treasurer, and Grand Recorder, shall be a committee to be styled "The Grand Fund Committee," whose duty it shall be to attend to the safe and profitable investment of this fund. They shall also make a detailed report in writing of its condition at the Annual Conclave in October. A failure so to do shall render them ineligible to re-election for the ensuing year.

ARTICLE II.—SUBORDINATE COMMANDERIES.

MEMBERS.

SECTION 1.—Every subordinate commandery shall consist of a Commander, Generalissimo, Captain-General, Prelate, Senior Warder, Junior Warden, Treasurer, Recorder, Standard-Bearer, Sword-Bearer, and Warder, and such other officers and members as may be found convenient.

BY-LAWS.

SEC. 2.—No by-law of any subordinate body shall be valid until the same shall be approved by the Grand Commandery.

except that the Commanderies located in the City of Boston shall have concurrent jurisdiction over all territory within the limits of said City & over any territory outside said limits wherein any one of said Commanderies shall have formed

CONCLAVES.

SEC. 3.—Every subordinate commandery shall hold a conclave at least quarterly for improvement and business.

JURISDICTION.

SEC. 4.—Every subordinate commandery shall have exclusive jurisdiction in receiving applications for, and conferring the orders of Knighthood over, all territory lying nearer by the usual travelled routes to its place of conclave, than to that of any other commandery; *provided*, that any commandery may waive this jurisdiction in favor of any person desirous to apply to any other commandery.

OFFICERS: ELECTION AND DUTIES.

SEC. 5.—The first eight officers shall be elected by written ballot; the others may be appointed by the Commander at the pleasure of the Commandery. The officers thus chosen shall serve until their successors shall have been duly elected or appointed, and installed. The title of the Commander is "EMINENT." The Commander of a subordinate commandery has it in special charge to see that the by-laws of his commandery and this Grand Constitution are duly observed; that accurate records are kept, and just accounts rendered; that regular returns to this Grand Commandery are made annually; and that the annual dues are promptly paid. He calls special conclaves of his Commandery at pleasure; and it is his duty, with his Generalissimo and Captain-General, to attend all conclaves of this Grand Commandery.

The duties of the other officers are such as are traditionally appropriate, and such as may be assigned them by the Commandery or the Commander.

OBLIGATION.

SEC. 6.—The officers of every subordinate commandery before installation, and every candidate upon admission, shall take the following obligation, viz.: "I —— ——, do promise and vow that I will support and maintain the Constitution of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templars and the Appendant Orders of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and the Constitution of the Grand Encampment of the United States of America."

ANNUAL RETURNS.

SEC. 7.—Every subordinate commandery shall make a return to the Grand Recorder of this Grand Commandery, on or before the tenth day of October, annually, of the roll of its officers and members, of all candidates for the Orders, accepted or rejected; and shall pay to this Grand Commandery four dollars for every Knight created, and an annual fee of five dollars.

ORDERS, FEES, AND RULE OF SUCCESSION.

SEC. 8.—No subordinate commandery shall confer the Orders of Knighthood for a less sum than thirty dollars, nor on any person who shall not have regularly received the several degrees of E. A., F. C., M. M., M. M. M., P. M., M. E. M., and R. A. M.; and no candidate for the Orders shall be balloted for, until he shall have stood proposed at least four weeks, unless by written permission of the R. E. Grand Commander. If a candidate be rejected, no new petition for the Orders shall be presented until after the expiration of four months from the time of such rejection. The Orders shall be conferred in the following succession, viz.: 1. KNIGHT OF THE RED CROSS; 2. KNIGHT TEMPLAR; 3. KNIGHT OF MALTA.

SEC. 9.—The petition of any and every candidate for the orders in any commandery under this jurisdiction shall be made in the following form, and signed by the applicant: Accompanied by the dues required for the Orders sought

To the Eminent Commander and members of.....Commandery of Knights Templars and the Appendant orders of.....

The subscriber, a Companion Royal Arch Mason, is desirous, if found worthy, to be admitted to the Orders of Knighthood in your commandery.

Residence.....Age.....

Occupation.....

When and in what Lodge made a Master Mason.....

When in and what Chapter exalted to the Degree of Royal Arch Mason.....

Of what Lodge now a member.....

Of what Chapter now a member.....

I am a believer in the Christian religion.....

I have.....before applied for these orders of Knighthood.

(SIGNED)

.....

(DATE)

.....

RECOMMENDATION.

I.....a member of.....

Commandery aforesaid, hereby recommend said Companion.....

.....for admission to the Orders of Knighthood.

(SIGNED)

.....

SEC. 10.—If it shall appear that the applicant has before applied for the Orders in any commandery other than the one to which he now applies, it shall not be competent for the commandery to act upon the application unless it be accompanied by the written consent of such commandery duly attested, if within our jurisdiction; and if without our jurisdiction, the consent in writing of the Grand Commander of the State in which such commandery shall be situated.

SOJOURNERS.

SEC. 11. It is not regular for a subordinate commandery to confer the Orders of Knighthood upon any sojourner from any State or place in which there is a commandery regularly established, except by consent of the commandery having jurisdiction. Any commandery which violates this regulation shall be subject to knightly discipline, and be required to pay, on demand, to the commandery having jurisdiction, the amount of fees received.

Any commandery may, however, take cognizance of the conduct of sojourning Knights.

QUESTIONS.

SEC. 12.—In every conclave of Knights, all questions, except of the admission of candidates and members, and of matters specially reserved by the by-laws, shall be decided by a majority vote—the presiding officer, if a member, being entitled to one vote, and, in case of a tie, to the casting vote.

COSTUME.

SEC. 13.—The costume of this Grand Commandery and its subordinates is such as is, from time to time, approved by this Grand Body.

OPENING AND CLOSING.

SEC. 14.—All councils and commanderies should be opened and closed in due and ancient form; and commanderies with devotion.

AMENDMENTS.

SEC. 15.—This Grand Constitution may be altered or amended by vote of two-thirds of the members present at any Annual Conclave in October.